

Statement of the HR/VP Federica Mogherini concerning the situation in Syria

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The people of Syria deserve more than ever to be able to live in peace and security in their own country. Our collective effort is required to accelerate and consolidate the ongoing joint work of the international community, under the UN auspices, to help bring about to a peaceful, democratic and inclusive Syria to all Syrians.

The resumption of the intra-Syrian negotiations facilitated by the UN Special Envoy de Mistura in Geneva on 13 April is an encouraging step. Both delegations have the responsibility to make this work and not waste the opportunity to save lives and to put Syria on the road to peace. We expect the Syrian parties and their backers to engage in the process on three key elements that were agreed by all of us in the International Syria Support Group and endorsed by UN Security Council resolutions 2254 and 2268.

Firstly respect, consolidation and expansion of the cessation of hostilities; secondly, the consolidation and expansion of the humanitarian access; and thirdly, most crucial, the urgent start of the political transition, with a real willingness to reach a solution.

The ceasefire in Syria has now been in place for six weeks. We are concerned by the recent violations, notably reports about new Syrian regime offensives near Aleppo and east of Damascus. Also, much more needs to be done on humanitarian access. Humanitarian personnel must be authorised to make proper assessment and provide relief and medical care. The Syrian regime and its allies are responsible for fifteen out of the eighteen besieged areas. The UN has still not received permission to visit the remaining besieged areas, including Darayya and Douma, that have become sad symbols of Syrian suffering. Medical supplies in particular are desperately needed and constantly being blocked. In this context, the EU strongly supports the UN efforts to resume Syrian Talks and push for the political transition for the sake of Syrians, the region and the world.